

More Advanced Rhythms (cont.)

Section **G** of *Stairway to Heaven* is a very high energy section – arguably, the high point of the song. The rhythm is fun to play, especially at a fast tempo, but it can be a bit tricky to learn at first. In order to quickly master this rhythm, below, it is broken down below into three steps.

Stairway to Heaven

Step 1: Without the accents, the rhythm is very straightforward. Play the strumming pattern at a slow tempo at first.

(Final: 4X only)

Step 2: Next, play the rhythm with the accents (>) as shown. To accent, simply strum the chord with more force. Notice that every third strum is accented. Count this as "1-2-3, 1-2-3, 1-2-3", making sure you accent on 1.

(Final: 4X only)

Step 3: Finally, you will mute the strums on "2 and 3". This will add a percussive sound that will emphasize the accent on "1" even more. To mute, simply release the pressure off the strings *without taking your fingers off the strings*.

(Final: 4X only)

A final word about preparing *Stairway to Heaven*

This book broke down each section of *Stairway to Heaven* as it corresponded to the topic of each lesson. It's assumed that you had mastered each section when it was introduced to you in each lesson, thereby making the preparation of this song much easier than trying to tackle the whole song at once. If there are still sections that you have not yet mastered, it's essential that you do so at this point. You will know if you have mastered a section if you are able to play it fluidly and confidently. Bottom line, when you feel you're ready to perform this publicly, then you've probably mastered it. If not, isolate the problem(s) in any section, whether it be right hand technique, strumming pattern, transitions between chords, or any other problem area, and methodically work it out.

Lastly, Led Zeppelin's recording of *Stairway to Heaven* is over eight minutes long! Not only is it impractical to require every student to perform this song at that length, but it is also unnecessary. Since the length of the song is due largely to the multiple repeats of each section, reducing the number of repeats will reduce the length of the song without altering the basic form of the song. Note the places where the repeats have been reduced: "(Final: 4x only)"